

TOWN OF ARLINGTON



PARK COMMISSIONERS
Jen Rothenberg, Chairperson
Shirley Canniff, Vice Chair
Leslie Mayer
Donald Vitters
Elena Bartholomew
Peter Hedlund, Associate
Crissy Tarantino, Associate

Recreation Department

Park and Recreation Commission Draft Minutes Tuesday, July 26, 2016 Arlington Senior Center

The Park and Recreation Commission came to order at 7:00pm for its meeting in the Senior Center on Tuesday, July 26, 2016.

Members in attendance included: Jen Rothenberg, Shirley Canniff, Leslie Mayer, Don Vitters, Elena Bartholomew and Associate Member Peter Hedlund. Interim Director of Recreation Jim Feeney and Program Supervisor Erin Campbell were also present.

Members from the public: Sean Alton, treasurer of Arlington Soccer Club.

Approval of Minutes – The Commission reviewed the minutes of May 24, 2016. Ms. Canniff motioned to approve the minutes as amended, seconded by Mr. Vitters and approved 4-0. The Commission reviewed the minutes of June 14, 2016. Ms. Mayer motioned to approve the minutes as amended, seconded by Ms. Canniff and approved 4-0. The minutes of June 27, 2016 were tabled.

Open Forum – N/A

Special Requests

Mr. Sean Alton, on behalf of the Arlington Soccer Club (ASC), presented a request to use 4-5 diesel powered light towers at Thorndike Field during the fall soccer season. Three towers were used last season and received positive feedback from ASC families and coaches. Lights would only be used between Monday and Friday until 9pm allowing for extra field time for the players between mid-September and mid-November when daylight is limited. Last season there were no complaints from abutters regarding the amount of light or the localized noise generated by the light towers. A motion to approve the request for an increase to 4-5 light towers was made by Ms. Mayer, seconded by Ms. Canniff and approved 4-0, Ms. Bartholomew being absent from the vote.

The Dallin School Council has requested permanent installation of a “Buddy Bench” at the Florence Field Playground at the Dallin School in honor of Katherine Wall. The bench was purchased by a donor. A motion to approve the placement of the bench and the dedication plaque wording, pending paperwork, was made by Ms. Mayer, seconded by Ms. Bartholomew and approved 4-0 with Ms. Canniff abstaining from the vote.

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Capital Updates

Magnolia Park Project – Ms. Mayer and Mr. Hedlund presented the results of the Conservation Commission meeting stating that the removal of the Dawn Redwoods and other trees were approved, pending two conditions. 1.) The meadow planting must be completed as proposed , and 2.) the town maintain the trees of three years. A 10 day wait period following the decision could potentially allow for work to begin on August 8, 2016. There will be further discussion regarding the optimal planting season based on this summer's drought and the approaching fall. The Commission is extremely appreciative of JNJ Sacca's patience and flexibility throughout this project.

The Commission will further consider drafting a letter to send to the Advocate regarding the project.

Robbins Farm (Public Input Process) – The Commission discussed edits and additions to the pending RFP. A motion to approve the proposed RFP pending edits as discussed, was made by Ms. Canniff, seconded by Ms. Mayer and approved 5-0.

Buck Fencing – Mr. Feeney stated that the updated proposal from Golf Range Netting has exceeded \$35,000 and needs to be re-negotiated.

Summer Street Backstop / Infield – Mr. Feeney stated that state funds have been received for the infield. The Department of Public Works will be providing the balance of the funds and working with Prescription Turf Services to complete the project in the fall. He also stated the Department will need to apply for capital funds in the upcoming cycle for work to upgrade the backstop and protective fencing.

Parallel Park Basketball Court – Mr. Feeney stated that the state grant funding had been received for the renovated Parallel Park basketball court. At this time there are center court drainage issues that are being worked out by the contractor and sub-contractor. Following the paving of the court, the Arlington DPW will seed the edges to anchor the soil.

Recreation Topics

Programming – Ms. Campbell stated that Club Rec's enrollment is currently exceeding 100 children. Kid's Corner Preschool Camp's enrollment has steadily increased, doubling that of last summer.

The fall brochure and field schedules are currently in progress. Side Kick Sports Academy (formally Side Kick Soccer) has expanded their program to include new activities that will be offered through the Arlington Recreation.

Ms. Campbell stated that the Reservoir Beach will close on August 19, 2016 due to lifeguard staff returning to college campuses. The Commission will discuss ideas for extending the beach season in the upcoming months.

Capital Improvements – Mr. Vitters shared that he is in the process of setting up a meeting with Andrew Leonard to discuss a feasibility study and cost analysis for Hurd Field, Lussiano and Buck Fields.

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The Commission will discuss next year's CPA applications, projects and schedule in September. A letter of intent will be drafted by the Commission regarding the Reservoir Master Plan. The Master Plan will encompass all reservoir areas as a recreation and conservation asset.

Policies and Procedures – Ms. Bartholomew presented topics for further discussion by the Commission. 1.) Town email address for Commission members. 2.) Clear signage for party reservations at public parks (i.e. a table plaque).

ADA and Playground Inspections – Ms. Mayer discussed her presentation to the Arlington Disability Commission, including the proposed ADA accessibility improvements proposed by Berkshire Design. The Disability Commission questioned the availability and designation of handicapped parking spaces. The Commission has already sent a request to Board of Selectman to get TAC recommendations for handicapped access and parking at Magnolia Park. A transition plan for ADA was discussed with Director of Arlington Public Works Mike Rademacher. This plan should be formalized in writing and document how the identified deficiencies will be remedied over time. Ms. Carrie Flynn requested that the Commission research wheel chair swings for future playground renovations.

Special Events – Ms. Rothenberg stated that the Moonlight Beach Party is scheduled for Town Day Night, September 17, 2016.

Off Leash Park and Program – Ms. Mayer shared that the “Give a Bag / Take a Bag” dispensers, a gift of an anonymous donor, were both placed at the Reservoir. One was intended to be placed on the Thorndike OLRA. The patrons have requested that Thorndike have a dispenser installed. Mr. Feeney agreed to have the dispenser moved.

Open Space – Ms. Bartholomew stated that the Open Space Committee did not hold a July meeting, but will be resuming discussions in the fall regarding “Walking Arlington”.

Correspondence Received

Mr. Feeney received a complaint regarding the “misrepresented content” of the murder-mystery play October performed at Spy Pond. The Commission discussed having Mr. Feeney send the producer correspondence documenting the complaint and the Commission’s disappointment if any inappropriate content was in fact displayed.

Mr. Feeney reported that he had been in contact with Town Counsel Doug Heim regarding the best methods for Commissioners to provide emails in response to a public records request. All Commission members will send responsive emails to Mr. Heim electronically.

Ms. Canniff stated that a permit should be looked into for the special event in memory of Catherine Malatesta due to the large crowd anticipated at Bishop School Field.

Ms. Campbell stated that Tinker Garden classes would begin on August 4, 2016 at Menotomy Rocks Park. The Recreation will receive 15% of the profit. The Commission discussed the appropriation of profits. Mr. Feeney stated that the profits from permits and classes go into the revolving fund. Field fees are designated for DPW maintenance, portable restrooms and administration fees for field scheduling.

Mr. Feeney is reviewing portable restroom vendors, restroom positioning, permanency and accessibility. The Commission will further discuss this issue in the fall.

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Mr. Feeney shared concerns about the trees at the Spy Pond tennis courts. The trees are in distress, likely due to the drought. The health of the trees will be reevaluated to determine whether their condition is covered by the warranty. In the meantime, the DPW will provide additional watering to attempt to save the trees.

Goats will be arriving at Menotomy Rocks park on July 27, 2016 and remain in an electric enclosure through August 2, 2016. The goats are provided through funding from an anonymous donor to help reduce the population of invasive vegetation.

Ms. Rothenberg stated that the Commission would be discussing new ways to spread news and knowledge to the public regarding projects. Ms. Bartholomew will consider potential new outlets for ways to share information with the public, especially as Robbins Farm project is underway.

Mr. Feeney can work with the new Director to explore the other avenues available through the Town.

Ms. Rothenberg will be participating in the hiring process for the new Recreation Director. A mid-September transition is expected.

Ms. Bartholomew motioned to adjourn at 10:40pm, seconded by Ms. Canniff and approved 5-0.

Submitted by: Deanna Healy

Next meeting is scheduled for September 13, 2016